

I hadn't lost my virginity yet. And it wasn't for lack of trying; it seemed like the rest of my generation was no longer interested in sex. On some level, I understood where they were coming from, the whole act did seem kind of pointless. But after a few beers, that wasn't how my mind was working.

I turned 19 last week. Dad flew in from Idaho, and it was the first time he was in the house I shared with my mother. He left when I was 12, and it was always apparent that parenting wasn't the top thing on his mind. There was some meeting on Long Island. That's probably why he was here, in addition to the fact he knew mom wouldn't make him sleep on the couch. He had many reasons to be in New York that weren't me. My birthday was just a flimsy pretense.

He'd worked on Wall Street the whole time he was around, a quant. He wrote programs that made other people rich. But something happened to him right before he left. A crisis of conscience perhaps; he was spiraling for weeks, cursing the capitalist system, calling my mother a gold-digging whore (which was mostly true), and saying things needed to change. Then he packed a single backpack and left for Idaho.

I visited him out there once my sophomore year. He had a camouflaged one room cabin in the middle of a spruce forest, but instead of the hunting or fishing stuff you might expect, the walls were adorned with electrical test equipment and various things that looked like they were out of a biology or chemistry lab. I didn't know much about this stuff and that wasn't what he wanted to talk about anyway. He wanted to talk about "man shit" like nature and women and not being life's bitch. I tried to act like I did, but I didn't really listen. All I remember is how eerily quiet the night was, I could hear every animal movement outside. My dad said you get used to it.

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Brian was having a party tonight. Well okay, *party* is a lofty way to describe it. He'd replaced the fluorescent lights in his mom's basement with blacklights, and we'd go over there to drink beer and smoke weed and sit around on our phones and scroll. And sometimes someone would laugh at something and share with the group.

I had a case of Bud Light left over from the last party and drank two of them today. Hence the thinking about sex and not thinking that thinking about sex